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Swedish Shipping Industry: A European and Global Perspective, 1600-1800

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Introduction[1]

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Sweden was fairly backward poor country in Europe's northern periphery - a kingdom with a large territory stretching eastward in the European landmass but with few naval ambitions, especially in comparison with Sweden's archenemy Denmark.[2] Sweden had an important navy, but an insignificant merchant marine. The kingdom's foreign trade was limited, concentrated to the southern Baltic and carried by foreigners.[3]

After two hundred years the situation was very different. Sweden stayed neutral during the first decade of the French Revolutionary Wars, as well as during other late eighteenth-century conflicts, and it became an important neutral carrier in European and the world waters. According to French diplomatic reports in the mid-1780s the Swedish merchant marine was the fifth in Europe, only behind Britain, France, the Dutch Republic and Denmark-Norway, and in front of Spain, Two Sicilies and Portugal.[4] Moreover, the Swedish flag became the second most frequent in the Sound, only behind the British, and in front of the Dutch and the Danes. Undoubtedly, by 1800 Sweden was an important European carrier.

From an inward-looking perspective, shipping sector became in the course of the time a important and dynamic part of Sweden's economy. The freight incomes during the French Revolutionary Wars made a substantial share of the country's foreign trade profit.[5] Another important change concerned the geographical scope of Swedish shipping operations. While the early seventeenth-century shipping was limited mainly to coastal shipping and traffic across the

(1) This essay is revised paper that I presented in seminar kept in Kyoto Sangyo University on November 1, 2008. I thank Prof. Toshiaki Tamaki for his kind invitation and the seminar participants for their comments. My special thanks go to Prof. George Bryan Souza for his extensive comments on my paper.

(2) On Sweden's navy see Jan Glete, "Bridge and Bulwark. The Swedish Navy and the Baltic, 1500-1809" in Göran Rystad et al. *In Quest of Trade and Security. The Baltic in Power Politics 1500-1990*, vol. 1, Lund 1994; Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea 1500-50. Maritime conflicts and the transformation of Europe*, London 2000. On Sweden's merchant fleet see Eli F. Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia sedan Gustaf Vasa Sjöhistoriska samfundets skrifter*, no 1, Uppsala 1940.

(3) For a general overview of Sweden's economic development in the seventeenth century see Lars Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, Stockholm 1996, pp. 107-108. More specifically for foreign trade see, Åke Sandström, *Mellan Torneå och Amsterdam. En undersökning av Stockholms roll som förmedlare av varor i regional- och utrikeshandel, 1600–1650*, Stockholm 1990.

(4) Ruggiero Romano, "Per una valutazione della flotta mercantile europea alla fine del secolo XVIII", in: *Studi in onore Amintore Fanfani*, vol V, evi moderno e contemporaneo, Milano 1962, p. 578.

(5) Lennart Schön, *En modern svensk ekonomisk historia*, Stockholm 2000, p. 60.

Baltic Sea, by 1800 the Swedish flag could be seen in Canton and Batavia, as well as in the West Indies and the USA. Swedish shipping business became truly global activity.

The situation between 1600 and 1800 changed dramatically. This essay will describe this development and it will discuss some plausible explanations. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that much of research has to be done before we will properly understand this story; history of shipping is not well-researched area of Swedish history. Swedish shipping naturally must be put in the context of Sweden's broader history, the short period of great power status, the fall during the Great Northern War (1700-21) and the outdrawn adjustment to political realities in the remaining part of the eighteenth century.

In this essay I focus primarily on internal and external factors of the development. First, I will pay attention to Sweden's mercantilist policy, especially its eighteenth-century Navigation Act (*Produktionsplakatet*). Secondly, I will analyze and evaluate the significance of the international situation – the external factor – and the role of Sweden's neutrality in the late eighteenth century. These two factors must be related to Sweden's "natural endowments", cheap shipbuilding material and low labor costs, however, impact of these is much more difficult to evaluate.

Mercantilist Framework and the Anglo-Dutch Competition In The Seventeenth Century

Looking at the decades just after 1600, Sweden's shipping was limited and it was concentrated to the nearby waters. In the Sound Toll Register Swedish shipping makes an insignificant share. The data for the first half of the seventeenth century are very scattered and unreliable. By 1613 and 1619 there were about 30 vessels from Stockholm active in the North Sea traffic, passing the Sound.(6) The data from the period 1646-56 show a rising number of Swedish-flagged vessels, between 100 and 160 (westward and eastward-going). Then, the Swedes made about ten percent of vessels registered at the Sound. However, it is important to stress that a half of these ships originated in Swedish German ports: Stralsund, Wismar, and Stettin. The other half originated in Sweden-Finland, and only insignificant share originated in the Baltic provinces.(7)

In the first half of the century the carrying business between the Baltic and North Seas was dominated by the Dutch. The Dutch shipping capacity was also very important for conduct of Swedish foreign trade, especially after 1620 when rising volumes of Swedish exports found their way to the Amsterdam staple market. Between 1627 and 1631 the Dutch controlled over two-thirds (65 per cent) of all carrying business from Swedish ports at the Sound and their share was the same by the mid-century.(8)

The Dutch shipping to and from Sweden mirrored the fact that the Dutch credit, merchant

(6) Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia*, p. 11.

(7) Birger Fahlborg, "Ett blad ur den svenska handelsflottans historia 1660–1675", in: *Historisk tidskrift*, 1923, pp.206, 213.

(8) P.W. Klein, *De Trippen in de 17e eeuw. Een studie over het ondernemersgedrag op de Hollandse stapelmarkt*, Assen 1965, p. 267; Fahlborg, "Ett blad", pp. 206-207.

networks and commercial know-how ruled Sweden's economy and foreign trade. This gave the Dutch economic power and influence in the same time when Sweden aspired for a position of European great power. Swedish leaders did not like this dependency, especially the Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna pointed out the kingdom's disadvantageous situation and took steps to reduce it.

This strive for a more independent Swedish position entailed a new conscious mercantilist policy, by 1650, aiming in diminishing Dutch economic influence. Regarding the shipping, the aims of the mercantilist policy were commercial and naval: first, support of Swedish shipping and shipbuilding in general, second, support of building of ships that could be included in the navy and used in wartime. Actually, this kind of measures was partly introduced already before the breakthrough of mercantilist policy in the 1650s. As early as on 31 July 1617 the Stockholm city privileges included important differentiation between three categories of merchant ships: *monterade*, *omonterade*, and foreign. The so-called *monterade* ships were heavy vessels, capable of carrying a number of guns. Such ships obtained reduced customs duties. *Omonterade* ships were not capable of carrying guns but they were Sweden-built; their duties were also reduced, but not as much as for the *monterade* ships. The third category included all other, non-Swedish vessels with no reduction of duties. The differentiation was shaped according to a Danish privilege and it shaped a basis for Sweden's shipping policy for many years forward.

The important trade ordinance of 1645, regulating customs duties, was based on the same principal differentiation in three categories but it defined much more precisely the differences between them. It seems that an effect of the ordinance of 1645 was a growth of the merchant fleet. The wholly-free (*helfria*, *monterade*) ships, had to be built in oak and they had to carry at least 14 guns. Ships that paid a half of customs duties (*halvfria*, *omonterade*) were Swedish-built and Swedish-owned ships, all other ships paid full duties.

The differences between the categories were slightly changed in 1661 and again in 1723, but the principle aim of building merchant ships for naval warfare was the same.(9) Ironically, the system of differentiation in three categories was out of date already in the 1650s. The development of naval warfare (especially the Anglo-Dutch Wars) enforced the maritime states to build bigger and bigger and more and more specialized naval ships – ships-of-the-line, which made merchant vessels in naval warfare obsolete.(10) In Sweden the last time merchant vessels actually were used in naval struggle was in 1645, in the war against Denmark.

It is difficult to evaluate the significance of mercantilist policy in the rise of Sweden's merchant fleet during this time. Apparently, the merchant fleet grew but this growth was not necessarily related to mercantilism. The growth, to a large extent, might be related to exploitation of Sweden's neutrality during the three Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652-74) and the Nine Years War (1689-98). The wars hindered naturally the Dutch from shipping in the Baltic Sea and the

(9) Carl Danielsson, *Protektionismens genombrott och tulltaxerevisionerna 1715 och 1718. Studier i merkantilistisk tullpolitik i Sverige*, Stockholm 1930; Sven Gerentz, *Kommerskollegium och näringslivet*, Stockholm 1951, p. 91 ff.

(10) Jan Glete, "De statliga örlogsflottornas expansion. Kapprustningen till sjöss i Väst och Nordeuropa 1650-80", *Studier i äldre historia tillägnade Herman Schück*, Stockholm 1985.

Swedes replaced them.

It is apparent that already during the First Anglo-Dutch War the Swedes successfully exploited their neutrality. For example, in the wartime year 1652 there were 175 Swedish-registered vessels in the Sound, by comparison a very large number. Nevertheless, the expanding Swedish activity in shipping also entailed conflicts with the English, who between 1652 and 1654 captured a number of Swedish-flagged ships.[11]

The decades between 1660 and 1700 also testify about large fluctuations in shipping during wartime. First, in 1665-67 and 1672-74, the number of Swedish ships expanded largely. Previously we have looked at the figure for Sound traffic. Figures for ship passports (*fribrev*) issued by the Swedish Board of Trade are another indicator of the development of shipping. In 1665, at the beginning of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, the Board issued only eight passports. In 1666 the number rose to 114![12] Such expansion, naturally, could not be supplied by Swedish shipyards, and much of this "new" tonnage was of Dutch origin. Dutch ship-owners simply changed flag. A good example of such abuse of the flag was the rise of the small port of Stade in the Bishopric of Bremen, then a part of the Swedish kingdom and near to the Dutch border. In 1666 and 1667, Stade's fleet expanded to 4,500 heavy lasts and the town became second ship-owning port in Sweden, just behind Stockholm's fleet of 11,291 heavy lasts.[13] No doubt, the majority of Stade's ships were Dutch.[14] Riga in eastern coast of the Baltic Sea went through similar development. Riga was the largest city in Swedish Baltic Provinces (present Estonia and Latvia) and a very important export port. Riga's fleet also expanded during the Anglo-Dutch War. The years 1665-67 showed the profitability of neutral carrying business between belligerents.[15] But the exploitation of neutrality also caused problems with the English authorities.[16]

The decade 1670-80 is perhaps the best example of the violent shifts in shipping volumes related to the wartime. During the Third Anglo-Dutch War the Swedish shipping thrived taking a significant share of the Dutch and English carrying from Sweden. Between 1672 and 1674 the English flag disappeared from the Swedish ports and that of the Dutch was significantly reduced. Looking at the Sound Toll data there were about 150-170 Swedish westbound ships in Sound in the same years. Nevertheless, the English were well aware of the fact that a large share of the Swedish-flagged shipping actually was of Dutch tonnage and, in similarity with previous wartime years, they continued to harass Swedish-flagged ships.[17] Harassment entailed complains from

(11) Werner Pursche, "Stockholms handelssjöfart och de engelska kaperierna 1652–1654", in: *Studier och handlingar rörande Stockholms historia*, vol. 3, Stockholm 1966, pp. 112-180.

(12) Fahlborg, "Ett blad", p. 219.

(13) 1 heavy last=2.448 metric ton. Heavy last was typical Swedish measurement unit. Leos Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce. The Swedish Consular Service and Long-Distance Shipping, 1720-1815*, Uppsala 2004, p. 242.

(14) Fahlborg, "Ett blad", p. 232, for Stockholm see p. 240.

(15) Fahlborg, "Ett blad", p. 221.

(16) For details see Fahlborg, "Ett blad", p. 226; Pursche, "Stockholms handelssjöfart".

(17) Steve Murdoch & Andrew Little & A.D.M. Forte, "Scottish Privateering, Swedish Neutrality and Prize Law in the Third Anglo-Dutch War, 1672-1674", *Forum navale* 59, 2003, pp. 37-65; A.D.M. Forte & Edward Furgol & Steve Murdoch, "The Burgh of Stade and the Maryland 'Court of Admiralty' of 1672", *Forum navale* 60, 2004, pp. 94-113.

Swedish merchants and ship-owners, and diplomatic exchanges on highest level.

The situation reversed completely during the Swedish-Danish War 1675-79. In June 1676, the Danish-Dutch joint force defeated the Swedish navy at the battle of Öland. An outcome of the battle was more or less complete Danish-Dutch control of the Baltic and North Seas and an elimination of Swedish shipping trade. Until the peace of 1679 there were no Swedish vessels at the Sound and Swedish shipping was reduced to coastal shipping to Finland and Baltic Provinces. Because the Dutch were engaged in the war on the Danish side, the English carriers were able to replace the Dutch shipping capacity in Sweden and, consequently, to increase their share in Sweden's foreign trade. The wartime period of 1675-79, finally, connected Sweden with the expanding British market and for more than a hundred years Britain became major market for Swedish staple products.(18) Regarding the direction of Sweden's foreign trade, thus, the changes of the 1670s had lasting consequences.

A paradoxical outcome of the Swedish-Danish War 1675-79 was a closer cooperation between Sweden and Denmark as neutral carriers—in spite of the fact that the two states continued to be each other's archenemy. The Swedish-Danish alliance treaty of 1679 included a part on neutral shipping and this cooperation was strengthened after the outbreak of the Nine Years War. In 1691, Denmark and Sweden signed a treaty "Union des Neutres pour la Sécurité de la Navigation et du Commerce" aiming at joined convoying and defence of Scandinavian flags.(19) In the eighteenth century that kind of cooperation continued and reached an international acknowledgment in the Leagues of Armed Neutrality 1780-83 and 1800.

The early 1690s were the best years of Swedish shipping in the seventeenth century. The number of Swedish-registered vessels in foreign trade increased to 750.(20) It took 80 years, until the boom of the American War of Independence in the 1770s, before Sweden registered the same numbers of vessels at the Sound.(21)

The development of Swedish shipping between 1650 and 1700 was also characterized by large fluctuations between different carriers during wartime. Primarily, this must be ascribed to naval warfare in the period: the Anglo-Dutch and Anglo-French wars, as well as the Swedish-Danish conflicts. To a large extent the fluctuations should be related to changes of flag, not to the rise in shipbuilding capacity in Sweden. The Dutch origin of the Swedish-flagged tonnage in the 1690s is obvious even when we look at the migration of Dutch shipmasters to Swedish ports. The Dutch historian Tonko Ufkes analyzed the migration of Dutch skippers to Stockholm between 1685 and 1699, and he unveiled a clear relationship between the inflow of the Dutch skippers and the Nine Years' War.(22)

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(18) Leos Müller, "Britain and Sweden: the changing pattern of commodity exchange, 1650–1680", Patrick Salmon and Tony Barrow (eds.), *Britain and the Baltic: Studies in Commercial, Political and Cultural Relations 1500-2000*, Sunderland 2003.

(19) Mikael af Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, Chippenham 2001, p. 31.

(20) Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia*, p. 17.

(21) See Nina Ellinger Bang- Knud Korst, *Tabeller over skibsfart och varetransport gennem Øresund 1661-1783*, Copenhagen 1930.

(22) Tonko Ufkes, "Nederländska skeppare på stockholmska handelsskepp, 1685-00", *Forum navale* 56, 2001, pp. 35-59.

Another noteworthy feature of the Swedish shipping between 1660 and 1700 was an extension of the geographical scope of shipping activities. While early decades of the seventeenth century were characterized by shipping within the Baltic Sea, by the late decades of the century Swedish ships were going beyond the Sound. Also the shipping to southern Europe, to the Mediterranean even the Canary Islands became more and more usual. Swedes carried salt cargoes from Setubal and the Mediterranean. The extended scope of shipping activities also meant new problems. In similarity with other Christian ships even Swedes were hassled by Barbary corsairs and many Swedish sailors got into North African slavery.[23] In 1691, there were at least a hundred Swedish slaves only in Alger and Tunis. The connection with southern Europe that became so important for the Swedish shipping in the eighteenth century was established already in these decades.

Swedish Shipping during the Eighteenth Century

In the years 1700-21 Sweden lost its Baltic Empire to Russia, it lost its great power status and, moreover, it went through a constitutional revolution that significantly reduced the king's power. All the changes had major impact on Sweden's mercantilist policy that had to adjust to the situation—the situation of a small state. In comparison with seventeenth-century ambitions the mercantilist policy adopted after 1721, thus, was much more realistic, with focus on the areas in which the country had comparative advantages. Sweden had a number of advantages; it had abundant and relatively cheap natural resources: iron and copper ores, woods, water power. In spite of the northern location and great distance from main European markets Sweden was in a relatively good transport situation. It had long coast and good sea connections with Western Europe. Also the fact that Sweden avoided direct engagement in the Anglo-French wars gave its trade an important competitive edge.

These comparative advantages were accompanied by an institutional package that facilitated Sweden's economic development in the course of the eighteenth-century.[24] The most important institutional measure, relating to the shipping sector, was Navigation Act (*Produktplakatet*) enacted in 1724 and shaped according to the English Navigation Acts. There are two important differences between *Produktplakatet* and the seventeenth-century ship differentiation. *Produktplakatet* forbade all carrying to and from Sweden that was not on the Swedish bottoms or bottoms of cargo producer's countries. This measure was directed against the Dutch, and it, indeed, eliminated Dutch shipping to and from Sweden. For example, before 1724 salt cargoes coming from Portugal or the Mediterranean were predominantly carried on Dutch bottoms. According to *Produktplakatet*, after 1724, this shipping could only be carried

(23) Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, pp. 56-60.

(24) For a contemporary comparison of advantages and disadvantages of Sweden's shipping with other countries, see Johan Westerman, *Om Sveriges Fördelar och Svårigheter i Sjöfarten, i jämförelse emot andra Riken*, Kongl. Vetenskaps Academiens handlingar för år 1768 vol xxix, Stockholm 1768.(Transcription on line: http://www.bruzelius.info/nautica/Maritime_History/SE/Westerman(1768).html, 26 November 2008)

by Swedish or southern-European ships. And because there was no southern-Europeans in the Baltic Sea, effectively, salt trade became Swedish monopoly.

Shipping of salt was extremely demanding as regards tonnage, It was barely profitable, because salt prices were low, but in Sweden, with long winters and dependent on salt-conserved food, salt was strategic commodity.[25] Yet, the large in-going capacity (with cargoes of salt) made it difficult to fill the out-going shipping capacity with suitable and profitable goods. Even Sweden's main export cargoes were voluminous but relatively cheap: iron, tar and pitch, sawn timber. The combination of voluminous and low-priced but strategically important exports and imports made the shipping sector hardly profitable. According to a contemporary Swedish treatise (1768), an export cargo on a Swedish vessel with Mediterranean destination was about ten to fifty times less valuable than a comparable cargo on a Dutch or English vessel.[26] Yet, salt imports were of such strategic importance that the state kept the *Produktplakatet* in work during the whole eighteenth century. Obviously, it was difficult to make such a business competitive and the Swedish ship-owner had to find other ways to make money in shipping. An important way – even if it is difficult to evaluate exactly – was tramp shipping in southern Europe. We will return to it later on.

A second difference, in comparison between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century mercantilist policies, was the role of naval interest. The seventeenth-century policy was intended to build a merchant fleet that could be used in wartime. But in 1724 the naval warfare was a business of specialized ships-of-the-line and there was no need for merchant vessels in naval warfare – of course, with exception of transports. *Produktplakatet* did not concern different categories of ships. Yet, it should be noted that the differentiation of vessels into three categories survived until the 1782 regulation of customs duties.[27] This does not mean that Produktplakatet had never been understood in a naval context. A large merchant fleet made a pool of experienced seamen and officers who could be recruited for the navy in the situation of need. In similarity with the English, also the Swedish merchant fleet served as a nursery of seamen. This aspect of the Swedish shipping policy has not been much stressed by historians, perhaps because of the limited use of the Swedish navy in the eighteenth century. But it was definitely considered when the debate about *Produktplakatet* was going on in 1723. It is important to mention that exactly this military aspect convinced Adam Smith to appreciate the English Navigation Acts, in spite of the fact that they were product of the hated mercantilist policy.[28]

The discussions about the protection of Swedish shipping in the years 1721-23 were related to a typical mercantilist debate on the country's balance of trade. According to the calculations

(25) On Sweden's mercantilist policy concerning salt, see Stefan Carlén, *Staten som marknadens salt. En studie i institutionsbildning, kollektivt handlande och tidig välfärdspolitik på en strategisk varumarknad i övergången mellan merkantilism och liberalism 1720–1862*, Stockholm 1997, and Stefan Carlén, "An institutional analysis of the Swedish salt market, 1720-1862", in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, vol. 42, 1994/1.

(26) Westerman, *Om Sveriges Fördelar*.

(27) Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia*, p. 27.

(28) Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia*, p. 26.

of the Board of Trade, Sweden had a large deficit of the balance of trade and freights paid to the Dutch and British ship-owners made an important part of it.[29] In reality, *Produktplakatet* did not affect British shipping. Britain's trade with Sweden was based on exports of Swedish products: bar iron, tar, pitch, sawn goods, and so it could be and was carried on British bottoms. The Dutch were engaged in imports – mainly of salt as mentioned, and *Produktplakatet* excluded them from this business. The direct imports from the Dutch Republic were limited. The impact of *Produktplakatet* on the Dutch shipping is apparent in the Sound Toll data. In 1725 and 1726 the number of Dutch ships passing the Sound from Sweden collapsed to six and three respectively.[30]

Produktplakatet was not accepted unanimously in Sweden. Small town merchants, especially, were afraid of shortage of shipping capacity and the lack of resources needed for shipbuilding and shipping business. Thus, the critic of *Produktplakatet* became a part of Sweden's eighteenth-century political debate. Anders Chydenius, priest and political thinker of Finnish origin was the most renowned opponent. During the insurgent years of the *riksdag* 1765-66, Chydeinus published the work entitled *Källan til Rikets Wan-Magt* (The Source of the Country's Misery). According to him, *Produktplakatet* was this source of the country's misery. Chydenius's major critical argument was that the Act made Swedish goods more expensive because the Swedish shipping was inefficient and uncompetitive.[31]

The Act became the central institution of the mercantilist policy on Swedish shipping. Yet, it was joined by a number of other institutions. A new Convoy Office (*Konvojkommissariatet*) was created at Gothenburg, with the aim not only of convoying Swedish vessels during wartime but also organizing the Swedish consular service in North Africa.[32] The building up of the consular network in southern Europe was a necessary institutional precondition of Swedish shipping in the region.

This mercantilist policy shaped an institutional package, a framework within which shipping activities developed but, as we could see in the seventeenth century, the policy itself could not guarantee any long-term expansion. The sixty years between 1721, the end of Great Northern War, and 1780, the beginning of Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, were characterized by relatively slow increase in shipping. The number of Swedish vessels in the Sound increased from about 400 in 1720s to about 800 in the 1770s.[33] The pattern of shipping after 1721 followed well the practice established after 1650 and, in similarity with the seventeenth century, the international situation did play much more important role for the overall development and alterations in shipping activities than mercantilist policy.

However, the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-84) caused a dramatic change. The war

(29) Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, p. 61.
(30) Bang-Korst, *Tabeller over skibsfart*.
(31) Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, p. 63.
(32) Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, p. 65.
(33) Bang-Korst, *Tabeller over skibsfart*.

reduced the Dutch shipping, both in short and long-term, and the Swedes and Danes took over the Dutch shares. This was a qualitative shift, in particular, in the Swedish figures. The numbers of Swedish-flagged ships in the Sound jumped from about 800 vessels in the mid-1770s to over 2,000 in 1785. During the 1780s Sweden became the second largest shipping nation in the Baltic Sea, after Britain and in front of the Dutch Republic and Denmark. Another way to confirm the qualitative change of the situation of Swedish shipping in the 1780s is the above-quoted French figures on European merchant fleets. The French report estimated the Swedish merchant fleet at about 1,200 vessels (170,000 tons), making it the fifth largest in Europe.(34)

It is not known to what extent this expansion was a result of purchases of foreign (Dutch) tonnage, as it was usual in the seventeenth century, and to what extent the expansion in the 1770s and 1780s was based on domestic shipbuilding. Yet, definitively, the situation in the 1780s was different in comparison with the boom of the 1680s and 1690s. The post-1780 expansion was preceded by a freeing of shipping from northern Sweden, endorsed at the *riksdag* 1765-66. Until this *riksdag* all foreign trade from the Gulf of Bothnia was channeled through Stockholm that kept monopoly foreign trade rights for northern Sweden (the so-called *bottniska handelstvånget*). The coastal areas around the Gulf of Bothnia, especially on the eastern Finnish side (Österbotten), were important producers of tar, pitch and sawn timber, and with expanding ship-building activities. The rising numbers of vessels from Finland and northern Sweden show that the policy was successful.(35)

However, it is also important to note that between 20 and 25 per cent of Swedish-flagged tonnage actually originated in Swedish Pomerania. The numbers of Pomerania-registered ships were, actually, far larger than the numbers of Finland-registered ships. Also when we look at shipping patterns there were important differences. Pomeranian ships were often smaller and seemingly more flexible. The first destination, mentioned in the Algerian passport registers, indicates that Pomeranian ships often first sailed to the eastern Baltic, to take south-bound cargo such as grain, timber. Then, they continued to southern Europe.(36) The practice of tramp shipping meant that ships were contracted for freights between Mediterranean ports, for example between Marseilles and Livorno. This was typical pattern for Swedish shipping business in southern Europe. Moreover, the Pomeranian vessels, due their proximity to Prussian ports, could and frequently did shift the flag. During the Russo-Swedish War (1788-90) many Swedish ships moved under the Prussian flag.(37)

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(34) Romano, "Per una valutazione della flotta mercantile". Naturally, the French estimates may be criticized but there are no better data for European merchant fleets, see also Richard W. Unger, "The Tonnage of Europe's Merchant Fleets, 1300-1800", in: *American Neptune*, 1992/4, pp. 247-261; Angus Maddison, *The World Economy. A Millenial Perspective*, OECD 2001, p. 77, Table 2-15.

(35) Yrjö Kaukiainen, *History of Finnish Shipping*, London and New York 1993, p. 38-49; Staffan Högberg, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet. Stapelvaror i svensk export och import 1738–1808,* Stockholm 1969, pp. 143-164.

(36) Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, p. 151; Jan Kilborn, "Den svenska utrikeshandelsflottan åren 1795-1820. En pilotstudie i Kommerskollegiums fribrevsdiarier", in: *Forum navale* 63, 2007, pp. 38-69.

(37) For example, Hans Chr. Johansen, "Østersjøhandelen og den svensk-russiske krig 1788-90", *Erhvervshistorisk årbog Meddelelser*

Even if the pattern of volatility related to fluctuations between peacetime and wartime continued there were some important differences between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For eighteenth-century shipping southern Europe played much more important role. The policy of shipping after 1724 was shaped to secure sufficient supplies of Portuguese and Mediterranean salt to keep salt prices low, and to avoid the Dutch carrying trade. Southern Europe was seen as an important potential market for Swedish iron and naval stores. Moreover, it is clear that in the course of the century tramp shipping had become as well a crucial activity for Swedish merchants and ship-owners.

A fruitful way to study the changed patterns of Swedish shipping in this period is analysing Algerian passport registers. The passport system was an outcome of the peace and trade treaties with the Barbary States and it provided Swedish ship-owners, captains and their crews with safety from corsair attacks.[38] The registers include all Swedish ships sailing to the Iberian Peninsula, Mediterranean and other parts of the world (the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, China) south of Cape Finisterre, a cape in northern Spain, thus the registers provide detailed evidence of overall Sweden's long-distance shipping. Unfortunately destinations recorded are only indicatives of the first destination. As noted before, when the ship took a cargo in eastern Baltic, this first destination was mentioned in the passports. But passport registers provide information about the length of voyages, and this indicates primarily if the purpose of the voyage was tramp shipping or just export-import business. But they did not say specifically anything about the scope of the tramp shipping, the ports visited, cargoes loaded, et cetera.

There was a steady but not very rapid increase in the number of passports (voyages beyond Cape Finisterre), from about 130 by 1740 to about 200 by 1770. In similarity with the Sound Toll data evidence, the period 1770-83 was characterized by a rapid increase. In 1782, the best year of the boom of American War of Independence, there were 441 passports issued. Similar rapid increase is then visible during the French Revolutionary Wars 1793-1815.[39] Thus, the evidence from Algerian passports confirms, too, the logic of wartime booms for neutral Swedish flag.

The pattern of voyages can be analyzed in the total number of days the vessel was away. Table 1, based on the Algerian passport registers data from 1777-85, indicates, a very large variation between vessels. Nevertheless, only about ten per cent of ships returned home during the same sailing season. About 90 per cent of ships stayed abroad for the next season or longer. There are about 20 per cent of ships going in tramp shipping for three and even more years. No doubt, the table indicates that a large share of Swedish vessels was going in tramp shipping.

The tramp shipping in southern Europe was also a consequence of the seasonal character of Swedish shipping. Ships from west coast (Gothenburg) or Swedish Pomerania usually left northern waters at the beginning of the year and were able to return back the same sailing

fra Ehrvervsarkivet XXVII 1976-77, pp. 35-54.

(38)Müller, Consuls, *Corsairs, and Commerce*, pp. 144-147.

(39)Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, p. 236, Appendix D.

Table 1: Swedish Algerian passports returned, according to the date of return, 1777-85

Year	Totally issued	Returned same year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Fifth year	Sixth year
1777	253	29	162	44	8	3	1
1778	287	41	128	45	22	3	1
1779	282	40	122	67	20	6	5
1780	320	40	172	68	21	3	1
1781	373	49	190	85	22	4	3
1782	441	25	267	74	20	11	2
1783	339	35	208	50	23	4	2
1784	370	44	225	48	17	7	2
1785	389	49	192	96	10	3	4
Total	3054	352	1666	577	163	44	21
	100%	11.5%	54.6%	18.9%	5.3%	1.4%	0.7%

Source: Algerian passport registers, KK Huvudarkivet, Sjöpassdiarier, 1769-78, CIIb, (Swedish National Archives, Stockholm) 1777-85.

season. However, ships from the Baltic Sweden and Finland usually left homeport fairly late (June-August) and had to stay abroad to the next year's sailing season, consequently they continued to sail for freight during winter. In the course of time this pattern became more and more usual and Swedish ships stayed abroad for longer and longer periods.

Data on arrivals at Mediterranean ports indicate that a large number of Swedish ships was going between Mediterranean ports. In Genoa, Barcelona, Livorno, Marseilles Swedes belonged among the major shipping nations.(40) The Danish and Swedish shipping appeared, in the long term, replacing the French, the Dutch and English capacity. Partly, this obviously was a consequence of Scandinavian neutrality and peace treaties with the Barbary states; but probably this also reflected the fact that the French and English ship-owners preferred business in the protected and plausibly more profitable colonial trades, in the West Indies and in the Indian Ocean.

Moreover, the Algerian passport registers provide also a good ground for analysis of composition of Swedish shipping. Of course, the registers include only a part of all Swedish ships, but a fairly representative part. Table 2 categorizes the ships according to registered tonnage. First we have to note that there is huge discrepancy between smallest and largest ships. In 1780 the smallest ships registered had a tonnage between 20 and 30 lasts (49-74 metric tons). On the other side of the set we will find Swedish East Indiamen, *Sophia Magdalena* and *Gustav den tredje*, with tonnages 500 and 514 heavy lasts (c. 1,200 metric tons). Table 2 shows that these were extremes. Vessels with tonnages above 150 heavy lasts were very unusual, representing 10-

(40) Hans Chr. Johansen, "Scandinavian shipping in the late eighteenth century in a European perspective", in: *Economic History Review*, 1992/3, p. 483; Dan H. Andersen and Hans-Joachim Voth, "The Grapes of War: Neutrality and Mediterranean Shipping under Danish Flag, 1747-1807", in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, vol. 48, 1, 2000, p. 9; Charles Carrière, *Négociants marseillais au XVIII^e siècle*, Marseilles 1973, p. 1061.

Table 2: Composition of Swedish tonnage in long-distance shipping, 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800 (based on Algerian passport registers)

Tonnage in heavy lasts	1770	1780	1790	1800
1-50	25	46	11	121
51-100	115	169	54	343
101-150	33	67	33	124
151-200	10	16	7	14
Above 200	15	22	10	22
Sum of ships	198	320	115	624
Sum tonnage	18748	29845	12534	53127
Average tonnage (heavy lasts)	94.7	93.3	109	85.6

Source: Algerian passport registers, KK Huvudarkivet, Sjöpassdiarier, CIIb, (Swedish National Archives, Stockholm) 1770-1800.

15 per cent of the samples. About a half of all vessels had tonnages between 50 and 100 lasts (c. 125-250 metric tons), and about a one quarter between 100 and 150 lasts (c. 250-375 metric tons). This explains why an average tonnage per ship was so low in comparison with the largest ships, below 100 lasts. The averages of the representative years 1770, 1780 and 1800 with large numbers of passports issued, had average shipping tonnage between 85 and 95 lasts. The average for 1790 is not fully representative because this was the year of shipping just recovering after the Russo-Swedish War 1788-90. Most probably the largest ships went first abroad. But, decline in average tonnage in combination with rapidly expanding number of vessels going abroad might be explained by the fact that during wartime booms, such as the French Revolutionary Wars, even small coastal vessels went out in profitable tramp shipping. Nevertheless, more research has to be done to understand the strategies of Swedish ship-owners during the volatile conditions of late eighteenth-century shipping trade.

Also after 1780 an overwhelming share of Swedish ships continued to sail in European waters. But there is plenty of qualitative evidence of Swedish presence in more distanced waters. For example, only between 1781 and 1783 in Bordeaux, there were six Swedish vessels registered for destinations in the French Antilles.(41) In 1784-85 the Swedish ship *Concordia* sailed from Lorient in France to Isle of France (Mauritius) and continued to Batavia and back to Amsterdam. The ship was hired by the French, for the route Lorient-Mauritius, and by the Dutch, for the route Batavia-Amsterdam.(42) Data of arrivals from Mauritius and Reunion indicate fairly active Swedish shipping during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, in spite of the fact that the Swedes lacked colony in the Indian Ocean.(43) This shipping in the Indian Ocean, as

(41) Private information, Jean-Claude Bats. 12 August 2008.

(42) C. F. Hornstedt, *Brev från Batavia. En resa till Ostindien 1782-86*, (ed. Christina Granroth), Stockholm 2008, p. 251.

(43) Auguste Toussaint, *La Route des Îles. Contribution à l'histoire maritime des Mascareignes*, Paris 1967, pp. 168, 170, 172, 174.

well as the activities in the Atlantic, were related to the Dutch difficulties during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War. Sweden together with Denmark and some other neutral carriers simply exploited profitable business opportunity. In principle, this was a short-term advantage that disappeared as soon as the war was over; and apparently in the shipping data from the Indian Ocean the Swedish flag disappeared after 1784.(44)

This shipping was basically shipping for freight and it had nothing in common with the Swedish East India Company that kept monopoly rights for Swedish traffic beyond the Cape of Good Hope. Swedish East India Company ships were going mainly between Gothenburg and Canton in China, and they deliberately avoided Asian colonies of other European powers. The company sent out only two ships annually, in average, but the ships were very large, as we could notice above, and the values of return cargoes were considerable. In difference to the wartime booms the Company carried on its business continuously, even if it has to be pointed out that the most profitable period in the Company's history also was the years of American War of Independence.(45)

The shipping business in the West Indies became much more active after the acquisition of the island of St Barthélemy in 1784. King Gustav III received this tiny island from France in exchange for staple rights in Gothenburg. The colony was small and it had no notable population or sugar production, however, it had a good harbor and in wartime it quickly could be converted into a center of neutral trade – a Swedish St Eustatius. This occurred during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars when the Swedish harbor of Gustavia on St Barthélemy became a free haven of traffic between the United States and the West Indies. St Barthélemy drew on the decline of Dutch West Indies. Nevertheless, strictly speaking the Swedish-flagged shipping at Gustavia had nothing to do with Sweden. The ships brought only Swedish flag, they were built, owned and run by foreigners with almost no connection with Sweden. They did not go to Sweden.

Concluding Remarks

The evaluation of the overall economic significance of Swedish long-distance shipping is no easy task. Nevertheless, the combination of data from Algerian passport registers, the Sound Toll Register and scattered evidence from shipping lists, lists of arrivals, letters, consular reports and other sources indicate that the scope of Swedish shipping activities was much larger than previously believed, and a very large share of the Swedish tonnage was employed in tramp shipping business. The major area of Swedish tramp shipping was the Mediterranean, however there were also a rising number of Swedish ships active in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean – in spite of the fact that country lacked

(44) Toussaint, *La Route des Îles*.

(45) Christian Koninckx, *The First and Second Charters of the Swedish East India Company (1731–1766)*, Kortrijk 1980; Leos Müller, "The Swedish East India Trade and International Markets: Re-exports of teas, 1731-1813", in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, vol. 51, 2003/3, pp. 28-44.

a colonial empire.

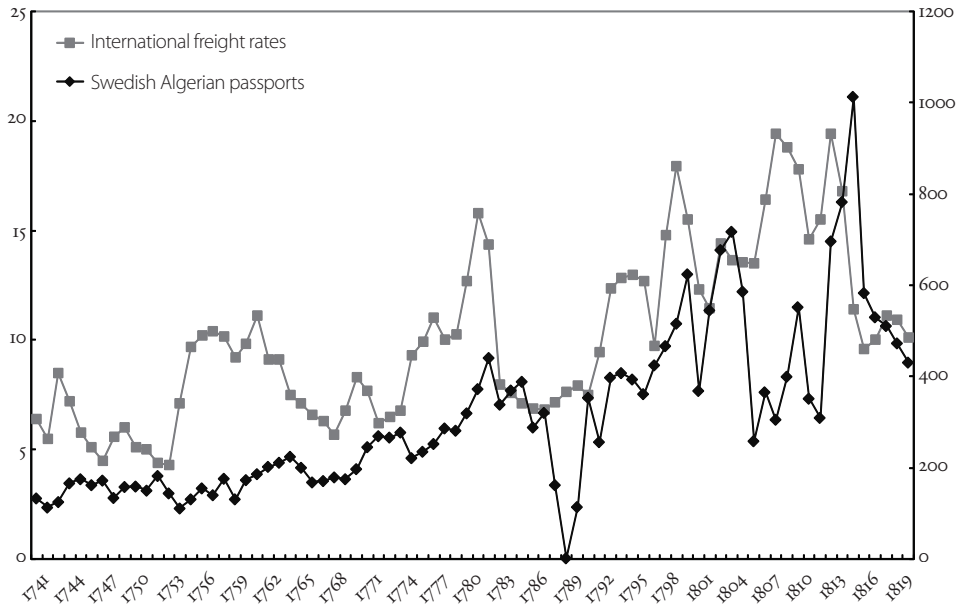
The crucial moment of the eighteenth-century development of the long-distance shipping was not the Swedish Navigation Act, as has been believed for many years, but the American War of Independence, and especially the later period 1780-84. There were two important factors of the expansion in 1780-84: the League of Armed Neutrality and the withdrawal of the Dutch shipping capacity, a consequence of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War.

It is clear that the development of Swedish shipping between 1650 and 1800 was directly related to the international situation – to the Anglo-Dutch and Anglo-French wars, and Sweden's neutrality. This relationship suggests that the outdrawn warfare (the Second Hundred Years War) shaped a trading system that to a large extent depended on non-belligerents' carrying capacity. Undoubtedly, the British and French merchant marines were largest and by far most important European carriers, but the neutral Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Hanseatic, Portuguese, Two Sicilies, and after 1783 American fleets mattered too. Eighteenth-century global trade should not work as efficiently as it, indeed, did without this non-belligerent carrying capacity. Warfare was almost constantly present in the world, but in spite of the warfare the trade grew, both in the North Sea, Baltic and the Atlantic. Warfare had also less negative impact on the functioning of the eighteenth-century trading system than some historians believe. Only during the Napoleonic Wars the fighting entailed a dramatic decline in international trade.(46)

Yet the dependency on wartime bust and boom changes also made the shipping sector extremely volatile. This is clearly visible in the correlation between volatile international freight rates and Swedish shipping activities (figure 1). It is difficult to separate different factors of the story of Swedish shipping: the mercantilist policy, the costs of shipbuilding, labor crew, profitability of the business. At the moment there is no analysis of Swedish shipping on this level. Nevertheless, the overall picture shows that Swedish shipping by 1800 became an important sector of Swedish economy and this sector did play a crucial role in nineteenth-century industrialization which in Sweden was closely related to export trade.

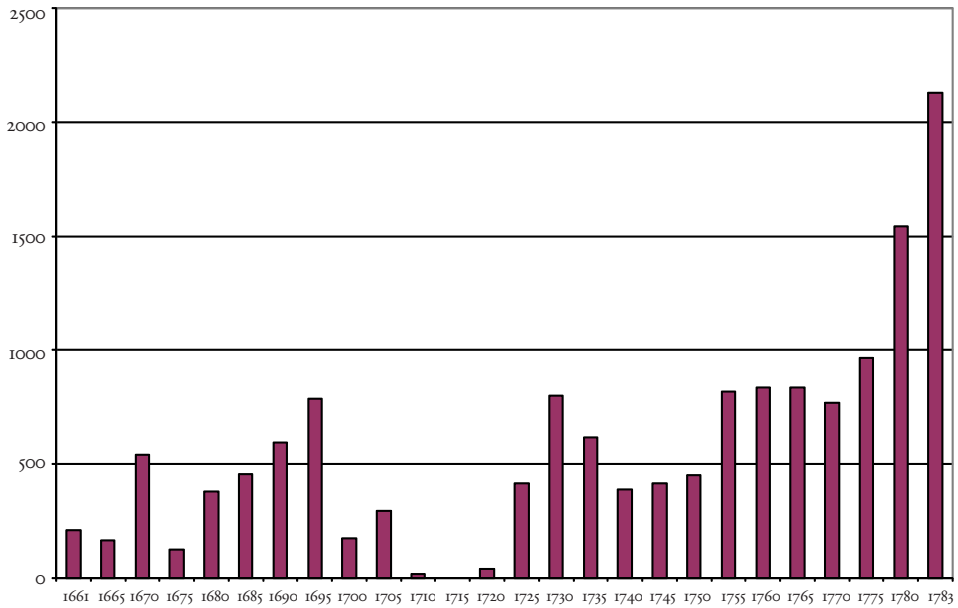
(46) Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History. The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1999; Kevin H. O'Rourke, "The worldwide economic impact of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, 1793-1815", in: *Journal of Global History*, 2006/1, pp. 123-149; Francois Crouzet, "Wars, Blockade, and Economic Change in Europe, 1792-1815," in: *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. 24, 1964/4, pp. 567-588.

Figure 1: International freight rates and Swedish Algerian passports issued, 1741-1820



Source: Leos Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce. The Swedish Consular Service and Long-Distance Shipping, 1720-1815*, Uppsala 2004, p. 236; C. Knick Harley, "Ocean Freight Rates and Productivity 1740-1913: The primacy of Mechanical Invention Reaffirmed", in: *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. XLVIII, No 4 (Dec 1988) p. 851-876. The freight rate series in Harley's article covers only freight rates for grain. The series works only as a proxy of the freight rate development.

Figure 2 : Swedish ships registered in the Sound, 1661-1783



Source: Nina Ellinger Bang-Knud Korst, *Tabeller over skibsfart och varetransport gennem Øresund 1661-1783*, Copenhagen 1930.

Table 3: Sweden-registered ships 1693-99

Year	Number of ships	Total tonnage (in heavy lasts)
1651		8680
1656	48	7560
1667	97	11291
1670	101	9105
1672	90	8453
1693	750	
1723	228	4984
1723	100	
1724	348	
1726	480	21000
1734	329	
1747	515	28900
1744-49		18000-22000
1760	456	26003
1760	572	32667
1774	664	
1785	900	57466
1790	598	23277
1795	832	20610
1799	685	43811
1800	1123	68074
1805	1003	64700

Sources:

1 Swedish heavy last=2.448 metric ton

1651-72: Birger Fahlborg, "Ett blad ur den svenska handelsflottans historia (1660–1675)", in: *Historisk tidskrift*, 1923.

1693, 1723-26, 1774: Eli F. Heckscher, *Den svenska handelssjöfartens ekonomiska historia sedan Gustaf Vasa Sjöhistoriska samfundets skrifter*, no 1, Uppsala 1940, p. 22.

1723-60, 1785, 1790, 1795, 1799: D.Hj.T. Börjeson, *Stockholms segelsjöfart. Anteckningar om huvudstadens kofferdiflotta och dess män med en översikt av stadens och rikets sjöfartsförhållanden från äldsta tid intill våra dagar*, Stockholm 1932.

1760, 1800: Bengt Carlson, "Sverige handel och sjöfart på Medelhavet 1797-1803", in: Åke Holmberg (ed.), *Handel och sjöfart under gustaviansk tid*, Meddelanden från historiska institutionen i Göteborg, nr 4. Göteborg 1971, p. 18.

1795, 1800-1806: Seved Johnson, *Sverige och stormakterna 1800-1804. Studier i svensk handels- och utrikespolitik*, Lund 1957, p. 247.

Table 4: Major European merchant marines 1786-87

Country	Number of vessels	Tonnage (tons)
Britain	-	**881963**
France	**5268**	**729340**
The Dutch Republic	**1871**	**397709**
Denmark-Norway	**3601**	**386020**
Sweden	**1224**	**169279**
Spain	**1202**	**149460**
The Two Sicilies	**1047**	**132220**
Hanseatic towns	**467**	**101347**
Portugal	**300**	**84843**
Other merchant marines		**339848**
Total		**3372029**

Source: Ruggiero Romano, "Per una valutazione della flotta mercantile europea alla fine del secolo XVIII", in: *Studi in onore Amintore Fanfani*, vol V, evi moderno e contemporaneo, Milano 1962, p. 578. The data based on information collected by French consuls in European countries.

Table 5: Sweden-registered ships according to the origin, 1795-1809

Year	Sweden proper	Finland	Sw Pomerania	Total
1795	883	83	269	1235
1796	869	113	289	1271
1797	922	124	316	1362
1798	920	118	315	1353
1799	852	126	324	1302
1800	971	161	368	1500
1801	956	167	364	1487
1802	988	180	371	1539
1803	1012	166	374	1552
1804	994	177	363	1534
1805	985	159	332	1476
1806	928	142	283	1353
1807	853	109	246	1208
1808	797	31	216	1044
1809	831	2	218	1051

Source: Jan Kilbohrn, "Den svenska utrikes handelsflottan åren 1795-1820

En pilotstudie i Kommerskollegiums fribrevsdiarier" (available on: http://www.hgu.gu.se/files/ekonomisk_historia/högreseminariet/pilotstudie-jk-95-1820.pdf, 2008-10-15). Note in the Swedish-Russian War 1808-1809 Sweden lost Finland.

【解説】

1990年代になって、スウェーデンの歴史家のあいだで、近世スウェーデン商業の重要性を国際的に認識させようという動きが活発になって来た。ここに掲載されているレオス・ミュラーの論文は、そのような研究動向を顕著に示す。

スウェーデンは、イギリスやフランス、さらにはスペイン、ポルトガル、オランダと同様、近世において貿易量を大きく増やした。そのスウェーデンは、海運業を発達させるために、2つの重要な政策を採用した。それは、1724年の航海法（Produktplakatet）を発布し、自国船による貿易を増加させたことと、中立政策をとったことである。

航海法は、イギリスの貿易政策と似通っており、オランダ船の排除を意図していた。さらに中立政策は、交戦国によるスウェーデン船の利用を促進した。18世紀のヨーロッパは戦争の時代であり、中立国スウェーデンを利用することで、ヨーロッパ全体の貿易量はあまり低下せずに済み、さらにスウェーデンの海運業が大きく発展したのである。

スウェーデンは17世紀前半にはオランダの貿易圏に組み込まれていたが、1670年代からイギリスへの鉄輸出をメインとする貿易システムに転換する。それはまた、イギリスの大西洋経済形成に寄与したことと考えられる。

さらにスウェーデンは領事制度を発展させる。商業的先発国であれば、まず国家の動きとは無関係に商人が外国に出て行き、本国との通商網を形成する。しかし商業的後発国であるスウェーデンは、国家が領事をあちこちに派遣し、現地での商業情報を入手し、スウェーデン商人にそれを知らせたのである。国家主導型の経済発展の典型がここにみられる。

また、スウェーデンにしばらく帰国せず、地中海などの港での海運業（tramp shipping）に従事する商人にとって、スウェーデン領事の商業情報は不可欠だったものと思われる。国家が、商人の活動に必要なインフラを提供した。この政策は、スウェーデンの輸送料収入の増大ももたらした。

1600年にはヨーロッパの北方に位置する辺境国にすぎなかったスウェーデンが、ヨーロッパ有数の海運国家となった。1800年以降のスウェーデン工業化の成功には、この商船隊の輸出が不可欠であった。本論文は、以上のようにまとめることができよう。

このように、近世のヨーロッパ商業史のなかで、スウェーデンがどのような役割を演じていたのかが明確に描かれている。本論文は、大国中心史観に陥りがちな研究者、さらには、研究対象となる地域を国際的文脈のなかでとらえられない研究者に対して、大きな反省を迫る材料になろう。

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